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RETAIL PRODUCE MANUAL

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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BELTSVILLE BRANCH

PRODUCE SALES AREA ARRANGEMENT FOR RETAIL STORES

MARKETING BULLETIN NO. 34
Agricultural Marketing Service and
Federal Extension Service
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

This is the eighth in a group of bulletins that the Department is issuing on handling produce in retail stores. The seven earlier bulletins are listed on the last page of this publication. This chapter should be inserted in a ring binder immediately following the bulletin on "Produce Display Work Methods in Retail Stores."

The bulletins present step-by-step instructions that will help retail store managers and workers save time and money in produce handling and will enable them to offer consumers produce of better quality with less loss from waste and spoilage. The publications in this group will also be helpful to specialists of the Cooperative Extension Service and State Departments of Agriculture in their marketing work with retail stores.

These bulletins summarize the results of recent research by the Agricultural Marketing Service looking toward improvement in handling of produce in retail stores. The material in this manual is based on Marketing Research Report No. 590, "Principles of Layout for Retail Produce Operations," and Marketing Research Report No. 501, "Display Location and Customer Service in Retail Produce Departments."

The research is part of a broad program to improve efficiency in marketing of agricultural products, reduce marketing costs, and bring fresher produce, with less waste and spoilage, to the consumer.

The retail store operator is the last link in the long chain of produce handlers and is the only person with whom the consumer has direct contact. Unless the retailer offers fresh produce in a satisfactory manner to the consumer, direct or indirect losses may reflect back through each handler to the growers.

July 1964

PRODUCE DEPARTMENT SALES CAN BE IMPROVED BY GOOD LAYOUT!

This manual tells how to:

Rearrange your department
Relocate your display cases.
Rearrange your displays.
Adjust your aisles
for maximum sales.

You may not be able to change
your present display fixtures.

IF YOU COULD, HOW WOULD YOU?

Research by the Department of
Agriculture indicates the most
effective arrangements for prod-
uce displays.



Check these points:

1. Locate the produce department first in the shopping pattern.

Produce
first

Produce displays can be inviting and serve to start the customers shopping. Profit potential is high in produce, and fresh produce may represent the preferred sale over canned or frozen.

2. Arrange the department so traffic moves in only one direction.

One-
way
traffic

Congestion is created more quickly when traffic moves two ways. Congestion hurts sales.

3. Use only one aisle for produce.

One
aisle

Most customers make only one trip through the produce department. As a result it is hard to get a high percentage of customers to enter secondary aisles.

4. Keep produce displays away from entrances and exits.

Don't
crowd
doors

Customers tend to move some distance after they enter a store before they start to shop. Items displayed before this point may be bypassed. Displays near exits or checkouts may also be bypassed or become congested.

5. Aisle should be adequate to handle customers expected in peak sales periods.

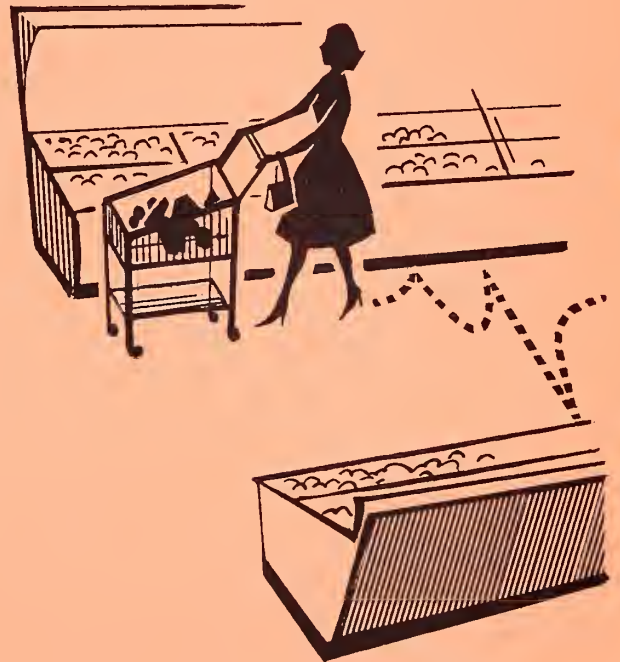
Space
and
customers

Customers need aisle space for shopping. Research has shown if they don't have it they leave the department and may not return. To prevent congestion the recommended aisle space per family shopping group is 20 square feet. This space would be allotted on the basis of the average number of groups in the department during busy sales periods.

6. Arrange the department to encourage "bounce" traffic.

Bounce
traffic

When a customer turns from a display she tends to be exposed to a view of the merchandise across the aisle. Such cross shopping, or "bounce," exposes the customer to the whole of a single-aisle department as she moves through.



7. Use specials to pull customers into corners and "dead" sales area.

Specials
in
dead
areas

Slow turnover areas develop in any layout. Find out where these areas are and prepare special displays to move customers to them. End displays waste space in relation to their effectiveness in selling. Use them sparingly.

8. Arrange displays to encourage complete shopping of the department.

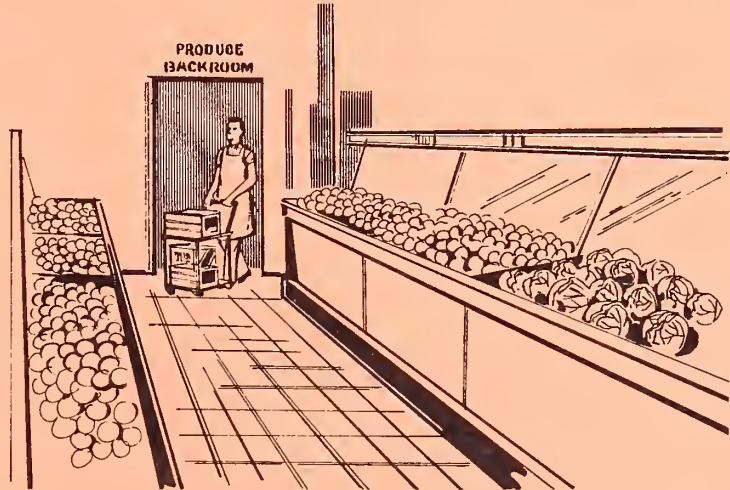
Complete
shopping

Arrangements that expose the customer to all the produce displayed return the greatest sales. Try to surround the customer with produce rather than aisles, and limit "escape" openings that permit bypassing the department.

9. Locate back-rooms close to sales area to minimize clerk travel.

Backrooms
close

Clerks moving to displays also help create congestion, and space allowances need to be made for clerks in determining aisle space.



10. Locate the service scale at the end of the produce shopping route.

Scale
at
end

When produce is weighed in the produce department by clerks, locate the scales so the customer does her shopping, then comes to the scale. This prevents backtracking and encourages the customer to bring all her items to the scale at once rather than to make a separate trip to the scale for each item.

11. Locate the scale so customers having produce weighed will not block aisles of displays.

Prevent
congestion

If a scale station is used and is located on an aisle, the aisle should be wide enough to accommodate customers waiting at the station plus other customers who wish to pass by.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO REARRANGE YOUR DEPARTMENT?

PLAN YOUR DISPLAYS DIFFERENTLY FOR EARLY AND LATE WEEK SHOPPERS.

Adjust displays to sales	You usually have more customers on weekends.
	A higher percentage of weekend customers buy produce.
	Individual customers buy more produce on weekends.

DON'T USE ISLANDS IN THE CENTER AISLE.

Don't divide your traffic	Small display stands can be used effectively to block exits, to begin the shopping pattern, and at the end of the pattern. Don't use them as islands or to divide aisles that have displays on both sides. When islands are used, display different merchandise on each side to encourage customers to shop both aisles.
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AVOID CONGESTION.

Sales per customer go down when aisles become congested. Customers buy about 20% less produce in congested aisles.

EYE APPEAL IS YOUR MAJOR SALESMAN

Expose the maximum quantity of the product to the customers' view; have the display shallow enough so that not much of the product is hidden.

Keep small displays, single items, and slow movers out of regular displays.

Use shelf extenders, overhead shelves, and so forth.

Use "theme" displays to put slow but related items together and thus create demand for them as a "block." For instance, onions, garlic, and root crops may go well together.

Where gondola end displays are on cross aisles, build the display toward the major aisle.

Use block displays. Keep enough produce together to create a "spread"; use color blocks to entice the customer.

CREATE BOUNCE

Bounce occurs when a customer turns from one display, sees the one across the aisle, and goes to it. This works best on well-faced displays. It doesn't work well for deep cases, such as some frozen food cases.

The aisle should not be too wide or too narrow. Seven to twelve feet is best. There must not be center aisle obstructions. Once a customer starts crossing the aisle to shop, bounce usually continues. It works like a rubber ball, provided you have the right displays.

BREAK DISPLAYS OUT OF THE CASE OCCASIONALLY

Use shelves or extensions, one on one side, one on the other, further down the aisle. These are called ALTERNATE EXTENSIONS.

Avoid putting fast movers together. Don't, for instance, put lettuce and tomatoes next to each other as these two major traffic pullers then merge as one. Opportunities for sale of adjacent items are less. In this case only two adjacent items could be used, not four.

Use signs and special display materials to accent displays.

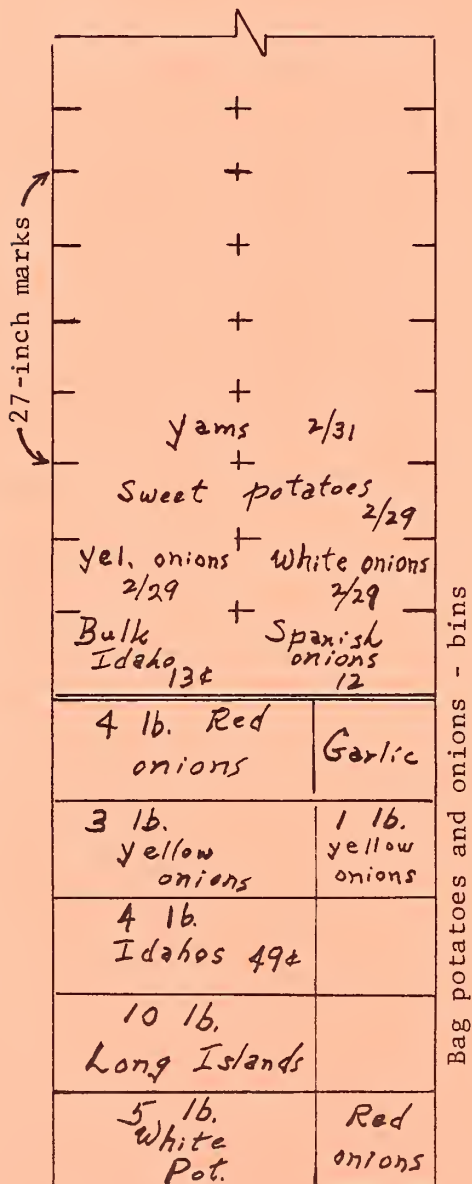
Use small tubs for greens, parsley, water cress, and similar products. Put ice in base of tub and display these products together.

Display some products in their original container for good display effect--this works well for some soft fruits.

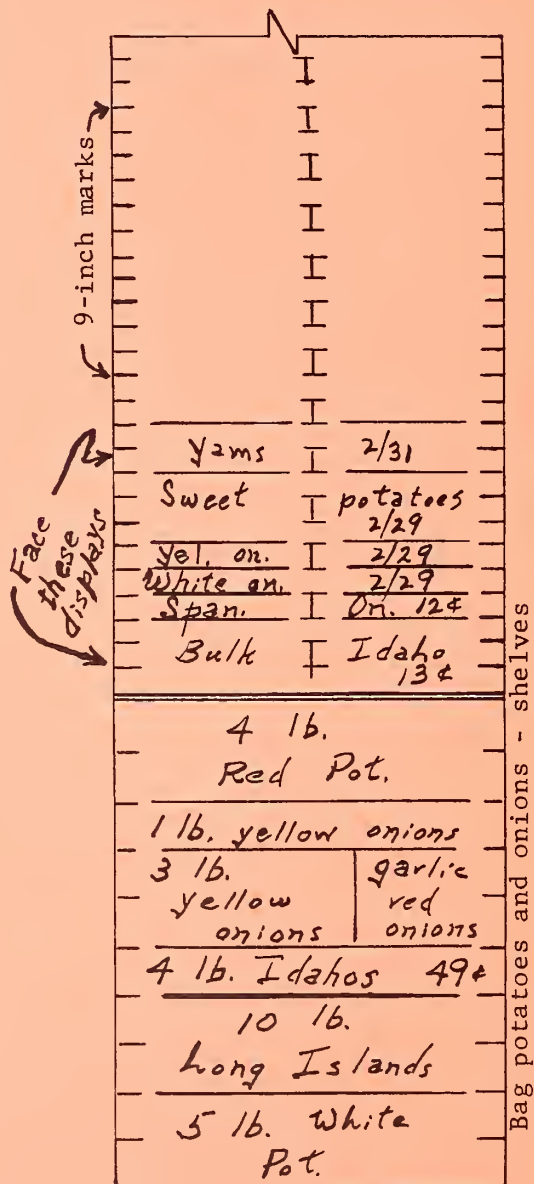


Layout guides can be used to plan location of various produce items on the display case. Names of products are pencilled in as they would be in actual use.

Tray display with
mobile potato bins



Conventional displays



DISPLAY PLANNING

DON'T GUESS--PREPARE A PLAN IN ADVANCE

Write it
down

Write it down so you remember and so the rest of the crew can see it. They can't read your mind.

When you prepare a proper plan, you do not have to shift merchandise to get the final setup.

If you place a row of merchandise at the front of the display case to mark off the displays, you have to handle each product in two batches. This means extra handling.

FIND YOUR COMMON DENOMINATOR AND MARK IT ON THE CASE

Keep widths
uniform

Keep variety of display widths to a minimum. Too many widths look sloppy; they are harder to plan, harder to keep.

Most displays fit a "common denominator."

Displays of equal width give better balance. For instance, make your displays 7" or 8" or 9" wide or multiples of the width you choose. If you choose 8", make the displays 8" wide or multiples of 8 (16", 24", or 32").

Most displays will fit one of these widths or multiples of it.

USE A DISPLAY PLANNING GUIDE

Use a guide

This guide is a sheet of paper on which you pre-plan y display before you make it.

If you know the size of displays desired, pre-planning is easy.

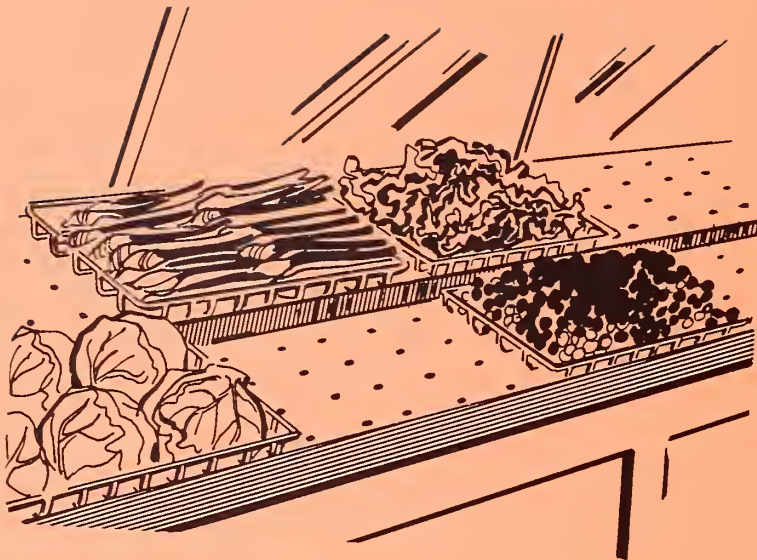
Make adjustments with a pencil, not with the actual produce.

The guide serves as an instruction sheet to the help.

You do not need to make a new guide every day. Minor adjustments can be marked over the original.

BLOCK DISPLAY PLANNING

Tray display offers an easy method for display planning. It uses the "block" system -- you plan in terms of trays or pans. The manager knows how many spaces he has and prepares pans to fill them. If adjustments are necessary, he moves pans or trays to get the desired balance.



Even without tray display, you can use the "block" method of planning displays if you mark your cases.

SOME TIPS ON PLANNING DISPLAYS

- | | |
|---------|--|
| Color | Use color balance--alternate contrasting color displays. |
| Tie-ins | Use related product tie-ins, but don't let these violate the spacing of demand items. (All salads together create a hot spot, but you lose sales on the rest of the displays.) |
| Mix | Don't be afraid to mix displays. (For instance, salads and fruit; logical arrangements may not necessarily be best for sales.) |

Shift	Don't get in a rut. Shift displays occasionally to create different arrangements, but don't change everything every week. Keep the department so the customer feels comfortable--so she remembers where most things are--change a few things to create interest for her.
Hot spots	Develop special spots. Have one or more locations where she looks for good buys--change items regularly.
Alternate	Alternate demand items with high profit items to create sales and profits.
Spread demand items	Spread demand items through the department to create a complete shopping pattern.

REMEMBER

Make room for customers.

Customers make only one trip through.

Arrange the produce around the customer, not vice versa.

Keep the department familiar.

Make a few changes to keep it interesting.

Keep it --

EXCITING

COLORFUL

AVAILABLE

WELL PLANNED

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Official Business

Copies of this publication may be purchased from the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., 20402. The price is 20 cents each.

Copies of the first seven chapters of this Retail Produce Manual may also be purchased. The prices are as follows:

Marketing Bulletin No. 2. Organization of the Work Area for Handling Produce in Retail Stores. 15 cents.

Marketing Bulletin No. 3. Ordering, Receiving, and Storage of Produce in Retail Stores. 5 cents.

Marketing Bulletin No. 4. Trimming Produce in Retail Stores. 25 cents.

Marketing Bulletin No. 11. Management and Scheduling of a Retail Produce Department. 20 cents.

Marketing Bulletin No. 14. Packaging and Price-Marking Produce in Retail Stores. 25 cents.

Marketing Bulletin No. 32. Customer Service For Retail Produce Departments. 20 cents.

Marketing Bulletin No. 33. Produce Display Work Methods in Retail Stores. 25 cents.

In quantities of 100 copies or more, the price per copy is discounted 25 percent. Cash or money order should accompany your order to the Superintendent of Documents.